

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Link governors: Louise Matthews

Policy written by: Kate Hunter

Date ratified by governors: February 2026



Reviewed (date): March 2014	November 2021 – Kate Hunter
March 2015	October 2023
March 2016	February 2025
March 2017	February 2026
March 2018	

Anti-Bullying Policy This policy is based on DfE guidance "[Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#)" July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance "[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)" and "[Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#)" guidance. The setting has also read Childnet's "[Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools](#)".

Our school does not tolerate bullying. Every member of our school community has the right to work, play and learn without fearing the behaviour of others.

Policy Objectives

- This policy outlines what Hylton Castle Primary School will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.
- The policy has been adopted with the involvement of the whole school community, and after seeking good practice from other schools and relevant organisations.
- Hylton Castle Primary School is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form.
- It forms part of the school's Behaviour Policy, agreed to by pupils, parents and teachers.
- As well as providing parents with information, this policy provides practical advice aimed at detecting, managing and resolving problems associated with bullying.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- The headteacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- All staff, including governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Pupils to abide by the policy.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying can be defined as 'behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally'. DfE 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying.

We believe that bullying is when someone intentionally and repeatedly (i.e. more than once) attempts to threaten, frighten or hurt another person.

We often use the phrase **STOP** with children to reinforce this.

Several

Times

On

Purpose

- Bullying can include physical and emotional abuse such as name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, taking belongings, producing offensive graffiti, gossiping, peer isolation (e.g. excluding people from groups) and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- The same unacceptable behaviours can be expressed online; this is sometimes called online bullying or cyberbullying. Specifically, this can include sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.
- Hylton Castle Primary School recognise that bullying can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development.
- Bullying is recognised by Hylton Castle Primary School as being a form of child-on-child abuse; children can abuse other children.
 - Abuse is abuse and it should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".
 - We recognise that even if there are no reports of bullying, it does not mean it is not happening and it may be the case that it is just not being reported.
 - All victims will be taken seriously and offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.

Forms and Types of Bullying Covered by this Policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including but not limited to:

- Bullying related to physical appearance
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying
- Sexualised bullying/harassment
- Bullying via technology, known as online bullying or cyberbullying
- Prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics) which may include:
 - Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
 - Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
 - Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
 - Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
 - Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying

The biggest weapons of someone who bullies are **threat and fear**.

WHAT IS CYBER BULLYING?

There are many types of cyber-bullying. Although there may be some of which we are unaware, here are the more common.

1. **Text messages** – that are threatening or cause discomfort – also included here is “Bluejacking” (the sending of anonymous text messages over short distances using “Bluetooth” wireless technology).
2. **Picture/video-clips** via mobile phone/tablet/other device cameras – images sent to others to make the target feel threatened or embarrassed.
3. **Mobile phone calls** – silent calls or abusive messages; or stealing the target’s phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the target is responsible.
4. **E- mails** – threatening or bullying e-mails, often sent using a pseudonym (pretend name) or somebody else’s name.
5. **Chat room bullying** – menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in web-based chat room.
6. **Instant messaging (IM)** – unpleasant messages sent while children conduct realtime conversations online using MSM (Microsoft Messenger) or Yahoo Chat –although there are others.
7. **Bullying via websites/apps/ Social Media Platforms** – use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal “own web space” sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Bebo (which works by signing on in your school, therefore making it easy to find a target) and Myspace, Tik Tok, SnapChat – although there are others.
8. **Trolling** - A troll is looking for a reaction. Generally, they will post something completely inflammatory and sit back and watch people become enraged, often causing arguments and always causing upset. Or they will post something totally off-topic in the middle of a conversation.

IS THERE A TYPICAL BULLY?

Most people’s image of a bully is a large child who corners and physically threatens a smaller child for money or sweets. This kind of bullying is difficult to hide in a primary school, and is quite rare.

Most bullying incidents involve children with some sort of superiority/power over another. They might be physically larger or part of a gang, but sometimes they may be popular or quick-tongued, able to make people laugh at others’ expense. Some bullying incidents are due to children “helping their friends” against another child, not realising that this makes them a gang.

Some bullying is caused by children who like to be in charge, but some is caused by children who want to show off to others. Some children bully because that is what they live with at home, but others might bully because they are used to getting their own way. So it is difficult to pick a particular type of child out as a potential bully.

However, one thing that all those who bully others have in common is that they cause great distress to their targets. They need to realise that fact and know that any incident of bullying will be treated seriously.

BULLYING – POSSIBLE SIGNS

Children may:

- Be worried about walking to and from school
- Be unwilling to go to school
- Progress slows in schoolwork
- Over-eat or under-eat
- Become withdrawn/quiet/disengaged – or the opposite!
- Pretend to be ill

The key factor is a **change** in behaviour that cannot otherwise be explained. These behaviours may be evident at school, at home or both.

WHAT CHILDREN CAN DO

- Tell an adult that you trust – a teacher or family member
- Walk away
- Stay calm – these problems can be sorted out
- Tell a friend
- Try to think of anyone who saw the bullying – it is very handy to have a witness
- Tell the person that you don't like what they are doing/ tell them to stop
- Write concerns and put in a 'Worry Box'
- Go to the Anti Bullying Table.
- Tell a member of the Anti-bullying Army
- Look at posters/leaflets around the school
- Phone ChildLine (0800 1111)
- For incidents outside of school, phone the non-emergency police number (101)

ANTI CYBER BULLYING POLICY - Information For Pupils:

If you're being bullied by phone or the Internet

- Remember, bullying is never your fault. It can be stopped and it can usually be traced.
- Don't ignore the bullying. Tell someone you trust, such as a teacher or parent or call an advice line
- Try to keep calm. If you are frightened, try to show it as little as possible. Don't get angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue.
- Don't give out your personal details online – if you're in a chat room, watch what you say about where you live, the school you go to, your e-mail address etc. All these things can help someone who wants to harm you build up a picture about you.
- Think carefully about which photographs you upload/share – consider what personal information people will be able to get, would you still be happy for this photograph to be online in 10 years? Do you have permission to use this photograph?

- Keep and save any bullying e-mails, text messages or images. Then you can show them to a parent, teacher or police officer as evidence. **DO NOT DELETE THEM!!**
- If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender.
- There's plenty of online advice on how to react to cyber bullying. For example, www.kidscape.org.uk and www.wiredsafety.com have some useful tips:

Text/video messaging

- You can easily stop receiving text messages for a while by turning off incoming messages for a couple of days. This might stop the person texting you by making them believe you've changed your phone number.
- If the bullying persists, you can change your phone number. Ask your mobile service about this.
- Don't reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages. Your mobile service provider will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying. Visit their website for details.
- Don't delete messages from cyber bullies. You don't have to read them, but you should keep them as evidence.

Text harassment

Text harassment is a crime. If the messages are simply annoying, tell a teacher, parent or carer. If they are threatening or malicious and they persist, report them to the police, taking with you all the messages you've received.

Phone calls

If you get an abusive or silent phone call, don't hang up immediately. Instead, put the phone down and walk away for a few minutes. Then hang up or turn your phone off. Once they realise they can't get you rattled, callers usually get bored and stop bothering you.

1. Always tell someone else: a teacher, youth worker, parent, or carer. Get them to support you and monitor what's going on.
2. Don't give out personal details such as your phone number to just anyone. Never leave your phone lying around. When you answer your phone, just say 'hello', not your name. If they ask you to confirm your phone number, ask what number they want and then tell them if they've got the right number or not. You can use your voicemail to vet your calls. A lot of mobiles display the caller's number. See if you recognise it. If you don't let it divert to voicemail instead of answering.
3. Don't leave your name on your voicemail greeting. You could get an adult to record your greeting. Their voice might stop the caller ringing again. Almost all calls nowadays can be traced. If the problem continues, think about changing your phone number. If you receive calls that scare or trouble you, make a note of the times and dates and report them to the police. If your mobile can record calls, take the recording too.

E- mails

Never reply to unpleasant or unwanted e-mails ('flames') – the sender wants a response, so don't give them that satisfaction.

- Keep the e-mails as evidence and tell an adult about them.
- Ask an adult to contact the sender's Internet Service Provider (ISP) by writing abuse @ and then the host, e.g. abuse@hotmail.com.
- Never reply to someone you don't know, even if there's an option to 'unsubscribe'. Replying simply confirms your e-mail address as a real one.

Web bullying

- If the bullying is on a website (e.g. Bebo) tell a teacher or parent, just as you would if the bullying were face-to-face – even if you don't actually know the bully's identity.
- Serious bullying should be reported to the police – for example threats of a physical or sexual nature. Your parent or teacher will help you do this.

Chat rooms and instant messaging

- Never give out your name, address, phone number, school name or password on line.
- It's a good idea to use a nickname and don't give out photos of yourself (or others).
- Don't accept e-mails or open files from people you don't know.
- Remember it might not just be people your own age in a chat room.
- Stick to public areas in chat rooms and get out if you feel uncomfortable.
- Tell your parents or carers if you feel uncomfortable or worried about anything that happens in a chat room.
- Think carefully about what you write; don't leave yourself open to bullying.
- Don't ever give out passwords to your mobile or e-mail account.

Three steps to stay out of harm's way

1. Respect other people – online and off. Don't spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including their phone numbers and passwords
2. If someone insults you online or by phone, stay calm - and ignore them
3. 'Do as you would be done by'. Think how you would feel if you were bullied. You're responsible for your own behaviour – make sure you don't distress other people or cause them to be bullied by someone else.

To think about....

- It is tempting to hit out at someone who is bullying, but think – if you do hit out you are breaking school rules, it will be much harder to stop the bullying, and it might give the bully just the excuse he or she needs to carry on.
- When you tell a teacher the bullying may stop quickly, but can then start again. Don't give up! Tell a teacher immediately so that the bully knows that they really aren't going to get away with it.
- Remember that bullying is more than just normal arguments.

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

If you feel that your child is being bullied please inform the school; Mrs Hunter is the Anti-bullying Lead. It is very stressful to think that your child is unhappy, but please stay calm – nobody wants bullying to happen, and it can be tackled effectively by working together.

Please encourage your child to tell a teacher if there is any further incident. It is very common for bullying to start up again until the bully realises that it will be picked up straight away.

Don't be offended when the school tries to get to the bottom of an incident. All complaints of bullying are logged and acted upon, but all pupils have a right to be heard.

However angry you feel about a pupil at the school, please do not confront another child. It puts you at risk of legal action, and makes it almost impossible to gain the co-operation of parents.

All schools have to act against violence, so please avoid encouraging your child to hit another. We all want to target bullying, but in school and in adult life anyone who hits another will face sanctions. Bullying is much more easily stopped when there is a clear target and perpetrator.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BULLYING

- Remain calm. Being involved in a bullying incident does not make your child a bully.
- Talk with the school to discuss how a recurrence can be avoided.
- Talk with your child. Find out how they feel. Help her / him to recognise what has happened and how it has made someone feel.
- Keep in touch with the school to monitor your child's progress, and let your child know you are doing this.
- If your child is involved in further incidents of bullying the school may wish to seek help from behaviour support specialists. Please support this measure and help the school monitor progress.

SCHOOL POLICY

This section sets out the school policy on how bullying is dealt with.

It is reviewed annually by staff, parents, pupils and governors.

Responding to Bullying Concerns

The following steps will be taken when dealing with any incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate.
- The DSL will be informed of all bullying concerns, especially where there may be safeguarding issues.
- The headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another appropriate member of leadership staff will interview all parties involved.
- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.

- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
- Appropriate sanctions and support, for example as identified within the school behaviour policy and child protection policy, will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, for example the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated and responded to in line with this policy, our Online Safety Policy and the school behaviour policy. If required, the DSL will collaborate with DSLs at other settings.

The school seeks to prevent bullying by:

- Identifying a link person, **the Deputy Headteacher**, to co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of the anti-bullying strategy – with the help of the anti-bullying team
- Using assemblies, performances, PSHCE, Kidsafe workshares and circle time to explain what bullying is, how it affects lives and how pupils can prevent it.
- Collaborating with other schools to share good practice.
- Identifying problem areas and times in school, discussing these with children and staff, and ensuring that supervision is maintained.
- Keeping up with best practice and training in the prevention of bullying.
- Running a “buddy” system and “buddy stop” for peer support.
- Working with support teams to run courses for pupils in anger management, working together, self-esteem and assertiveness.
- Ensuring that all staff, parents and pupils are aware of this policy and follow the guidance in it.
- Educating parents in annual workshares about bullying/cyber-bullying
- Working with parents

The school responds to accusations of bullying by:

- Talking to the pupils involved, and any witnesses
- Recording all incidents on CPOMS.
- Contacting the parents/carers of both parties
- Monitoring the situation regularly (approx. every two weeks)

The school supports targets of bullying by:

- Offering and organising peer support
- Ensuring that staff know about the problem
- If appropriate, organising support such as self-esteem or assertiveness training
- If appropriate, offering Nurture Group time to develop emotional security
- Discussing progress every few weeks

The school will take the following action against those who bully:

Step	Action
Stage 1	Parents informed Consequence Education
Stage 2	Parents informed Referrals to outside agencies Consider fixed term suspension
Stage 3	Suspension - term determined by Head Teacher

Stage 1

Where there is substantiated evidence of bullying, the school will respond as described above. Parents will be informed and the pupil may face sanctions such as after-school detention, lunchtime suspension, or missed playtimes, depending upon the severity of the behaviour. The pupil will be warned that they risk suspension if the bullying behaviour continues. The pupil will then receive support to enable them to change their behaviour.

Stage 2

The school will inform parents and make a referral to the Behaviour Support Team to seek outside help to manage the behaviour. This support would be to the benefit of the pupil, the school, and the target, so parents will be asked to consent to the referral. If consent to refer is withheld, the school will consider fixed-term suspension. The pupil will be asked to sign a behaviour contract.

Stage 3

The pupil will be suspended from school for a period determined by the Head Teacher. The suspension will be reported to the school governing body and to the Local Authority.

N.B. These sanctions apply to non-violent bullying incidents with corroborating evidence. Pupils who use violence in school risk suspension immediately, as detailed in the school's behaviour policy.

If there is no evidence to support an accusation of bullying even after an investigation the incident will be logged, parents will be informed of a concern and the situation will be monitored as described above. The target will be offered support as described above and the pupil accused of bullying will be told that there is a concern, but will not face sanctions.

The school will assist those involved in bullying incidents by:

- Explaining what aspects of their behaviour are unacceptable
- Providing one to one support time
- Providing, if appropriate, courses in anger management, self-esteem and empathy
- Discussing progress every few weeks
- Offering advice/support to parents – this may include signposting to other services

This policy applies to all pupils in the school regardless of race, gender or belief. Pupils with special needs are also included, although reference will be made to their individual circumstances when implementing the policy.

Parents who are not satisfied with the action taken by the school should:

1. Discuss their concerns with the Head Teacher
2. If still not satisfied parents can write, detailing their concern to The Chair of Governors, c/o Hylton Castle Primary School, Caithness Road, Sunderland SR5 8RE
3. If, after receiving a written response from the Chair of Governors, parents still feel that they have a grievance, they should write to the Director of Childrens' Services at the Civic Centre, Sunderland.

Supporting Adults

Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of adults, including staff and parents, whether by pupils, parents or other staff members, is unacceptable. Adults who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead, a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher.
- Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to future concerns.
- Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the schools' behaviour and discipline policy.
- Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Adults who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher to establish the concern.
- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures.
- If online, requesting that content be removed.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

Useful information can be found at:

The following links may provide additional support to children, staff or families.

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

Cyberbullying

- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Report Harmful Content: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com/>
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- The UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS):
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ukcouncil-for-internet-safety
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: advice for headteachers and school staff':
www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- DfE 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying':
www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities:
www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/at-risk-groups/sen-disability

Religion and Nationality

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
 - Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
 - Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
 - Tell Mama: www.tellmamauk.org
 - Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
 - Show Racism the Red Card: www.srrc.org/educational

LGBTQ+

- Barnardo's LGBTQ Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm
- Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Bullying

- NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' Helpline: 0800 136 663 or help@nspcc.org.uk
- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW): www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
- Disrespect No Body: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaignposters
- Anti-bullying Alliance: Preventing and responding to Sexual Bullying:
www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-sexist-bullying
- Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/toolsinformation/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-sexist-bullying/investigating-and-respondingsexual>
- Childnet Project DeShame (Online Sexual Harassment and Bullying): www.childnet.com/our-projects/project-deshame

